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The Great Game of Politics

Sleers on Cabinet Boomerang

By FRANK R. KENT

WASHINGTON, July 25—Gradually, it seems, the left-wing journalistic bel-lowing about the "Big Business Men" with whom the President has surrounded himself has died down to a low murmur. For a while there was what appeared to be a concerted attack upon several members of the Cabinet with the idea that one or more resignations could be forced.

Defense Secretary Wilson and Secretary of Agriculture Benson were the first targets. Though they had to put up with much distortion of fact concerning what they said and did, neither batted an eye under the barrage.

Now the attack seems to have shifted to the Dulles brothers—John Foster, the Secretary of State, and Allen, head of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Country Fortunate to Have Them

To date, the only result of this has been to confirm several quite well-known facts, to wit: (1) they are two of the most able and deeply experienced men who have been in the Government service for many years; (2) they are wholly patriotic, disinterested and sincere; (3) the sacrifice they are making to do their jobs is real, though neither admits it nor regards it as a sacrifice. Most informed persons agree the country, as well as the Administration, is fortunate to have them in its service.

However, these facts have not stopped the effort to belittle and harass. In the case of Allen Dulles it has taken the form of trying to force him into a public brawl with Senator McCarthy or a break with the President. In neither direction has the effort achieved any degree of success.

Patient, Good-Tempered, Firm

Dulles has been patient, good-tempered but quite firm in dealing with the McCarthy attempt to put CIA men on the witness stand. And has had unwavering support from the President. Also, the ridiculous criticism of his failure to hold regular press conferences for the purpose of "telling all" has had no effect at all.

As to Secretary of State Dulles, for quite a time the New-Fair Deal spokesmen have predicted that very soon his resignation would be tendered and accepted. He has been accused of blindly following the Truman-Acheson policies, of having "surrendered to McCarthy" and of being in a state of intellectual bewilderment.

The truth is, at no time has he thought of resigning—and if he did tender his resignation it would not be accepted. Furthermore, the only Truman-Acheson policies he is following are those he inherited and to which the country is so committed that we could not retreat with honor. As for his "intellectual bewilderment," that is absurd. He is as clear-headed, courageous and determined a man as has occupied his office for many years.

Incidentally, the merry persiflage that both press and radio reported as passing between Acheson and Truman when they met in Washington a few weeks ago distressed some of Acheson's admirers, who felt the attacks on him as Secretary of State were largely unjustified and that he is an able man of high character.

Efforts Singularly Ineffective

He was said to have remarked to the ex-President that he could not help thinking of him as still in the White House, "though," he said, "I am told there is no one living there now." Truman guffawed.

It was exactly the cheap sort of sneer he most appreciates. But it was unworthy of Acheson. He should have been above that. It was on the low level of some of the smart-aleck quips that used to be aimed at him.

Looking over the first six months of the Administration, it does seem that the efforts to belittle General Ike and the men gathered around him have been singularly ineffective. True, in the present state of the world no one can see very far into the future, but the Eisenhower accomplishments make the "lack of leadership" theme song of the opposition more than a little absurd. In addition, the Big Business Men upon whom he has placed responsibility appear to fit their jobs very well, notwithstanding the awful charge that, like their boss, they don't know nothin' about politics."

If this were true it could be an asset as well as a liability. But, to be frank, it is by no means wholly true. There are men close to the President who know a lot about politics. There are ex-Governor Sherman Adams, Attorney General Brownell, Postmaster General Summerfield, Press Secretary Hagerty—to mention a few.

Crooks, Big or Little, Won't Last

Also the idea that the President has not learned considerable politics in the last two years is not well founded. The important thing is that the politicians of this Administration are different from those who preceded them. They live in a better atmosphere, operate on a higher plane.

Some fumbles have been—and will be—made by the Eisenhower men, but one thing is sure: This is not an Administration that will breed graft and grafters. Neither big nor little crooks will last long in it. These men may make mistakes but they will not smell bad.